

# Principles of Environmental Restoration

## Principle 1 - Build an Effective Core Team

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Building an effective core team is essential to the successful application of the other principles

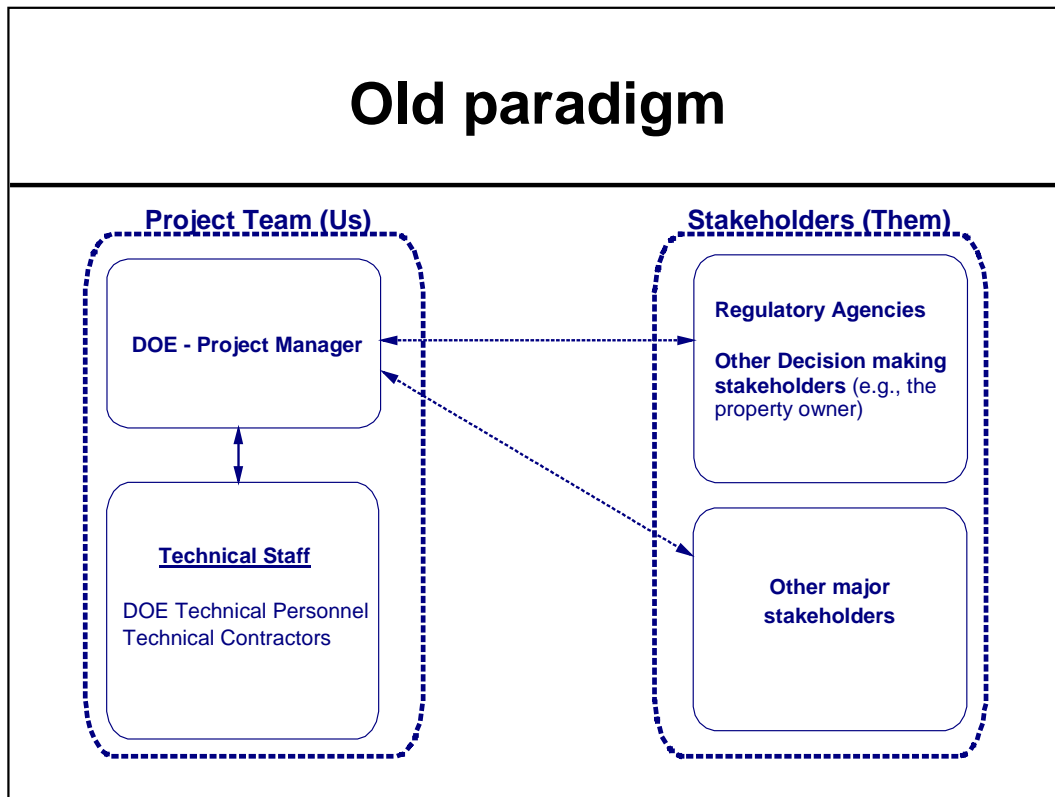
- Session objectives
  - Be able to define roles and responsibilities of core and project teams
  - Understand the critical success factors in establishing and developing effective core and project teams

The ability to utilize flexibility in regulatory authorities is largely dependent on cooperative project management and effective stakeholder involvement

Core team (e.g., DOE, EPA, and the State) is the formal decision making body for environmental restoration projects. Other staff and technical support (e.g., consultants) and interested publics actively participate in decisions as part of the project team, but are not "official" decision makers

The core team is an inter-agency team, and may also involve other decision making stakeholders. DOE is the lead agency while EPA and the State have statutory-, regulatory-, and FFA-specific roles

To a large extent, DOE cleanups are driven by external interests. Therefore, it is appropriate to involve external parties in the decision making process to the degree they wish to participate



Under the old paradigm, DOE and their contractors developed the strategies and plans, did the work, and wrote the reports separately from stakeholders. Regulatory agencies were consulted sporadically and infrequently and reviewed the work when it was done

This has been true in the past of regulatory agencies' involvement of their stakeholders

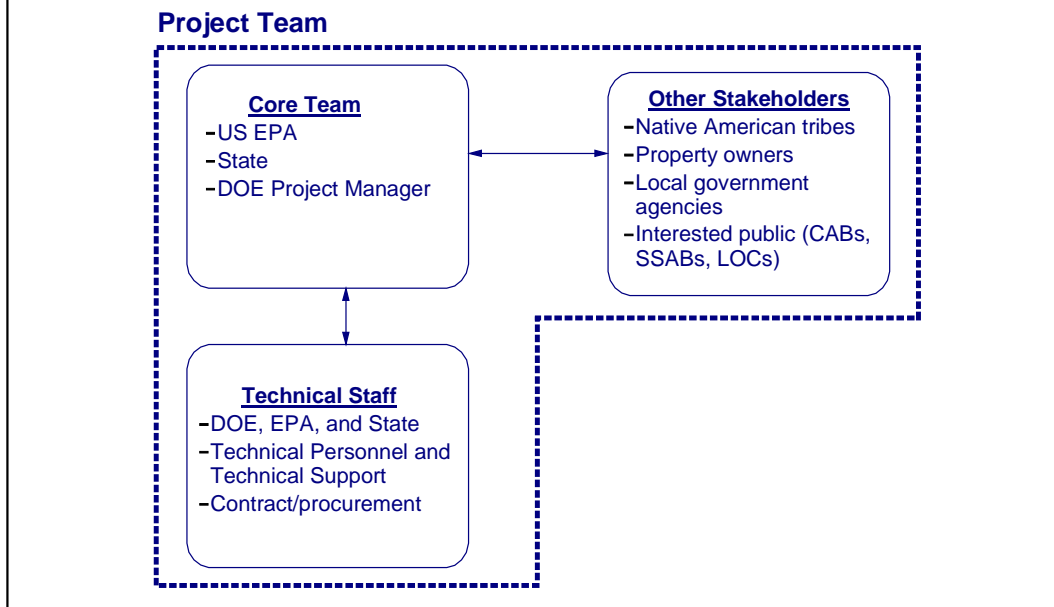
Ultimately, any stakeholder will almost always have a different viewpoint, no matter how sound the strategies and plans, no matter how competent the work, and no matter how well the reports are written

Any stakeholder tends to be more rigid in their positions when not given early and frequent opportunities to provide input and express their needs/desires

The lessons learned from past experience are to involve stakeholders early in the decision making process, as frequently as practicable, and, when possible, at steps in the process that are predetermined

# New paradigm

## *Core Team / Project Team Approach*



Environmental restoration is not merely a technical project done by a team of DOE personnel, with occasional review by outside parties. Under the new paradigm, DOE extends involvement beyond its own personnel so that key stakeholders (e.g., regulators) become active members of the core team, fully engaged and responsible for the scope, direction, objectives, and results of the project

The new paradigm provides an opportunity for regulatory agencies to use their authorities to move the project forward. What they will and will not agree to are known sooner than under the old paradigm

This paradigm involves sharing control at the outset of a project, making all decision making authorities responsible for moving the project forward

**Core Team:** A cooperative team of DOE, EPA, and the State (and others, where appropriate) which, by consensus, defines, scopes, plans, and directs an environmental restoration project from initial identification through final design and remediation

## Critical success factors in the new paradigm

- Work together to reach consensus before doing work
- EPA, State, and DOE become "co-project managers" -- owners of process and results
- Proposals initiated orally through informal, routine communications
- No surprises at meetings or in documents
- Core team defines/describes anticipated expectations of all deliverables
- Early/continuous attention to team process and relationships

Example members of project team:

- Natural resource trustees
- Native American tribes
- Local regulators or governmental units
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs)

General public involvement

- Most DOE sites have citizen advisory boards through which public involvement is handled
- Local conditions determine which public voices should be engaged and when. But, in general, if there are voices which can strongly affect decisions, it is better to hear those voices sooner rather than later
- The core team should look for opportune times to engage the public with interim results, preliminary conclusions/ decisions, etc. Whenever the public or the project could benefit from a formal opportunity for the public to review what has been or is being done or proposed, and to comment or offer input, that opportunity should be made available

## Core team

- Includes decision making stakeholders ("yes/no" authority)
- Owns the process as well as the product
- Decides, by consensus, all major aspects of the project
- Each member represents the public's best interests

At a minimum, the core team will need to include DOE (as lead agency), EPA, state regulators, the land owner (if not DOE), and any local regulators (such as water control boards).

Key decision makers need to work as a team and decide, by consensus, all the major aspects of the project. All members must be fully engaged and responsible for the project's scope, direction, objectives, and results

Each team member is responsible for making important contributions to the project's success. DOE-technical resources and money; EPA-technical support and regulatory interpretation; State-regulatory interpretation and representation of local concerns

The core team operates by meetings or conference calls in which decisions are at issue. DOE staff and their consultants do all the technical "leg work" necessary to facilitate analysis and decision making by the core team during meetings

Although the core team makes decisions arrived at through consensus, DOE is the lead agency for the duration of the project, performing all technical work as agreed to by the core team, and directing the work of its consultants

## **Challenges to an effective core team**

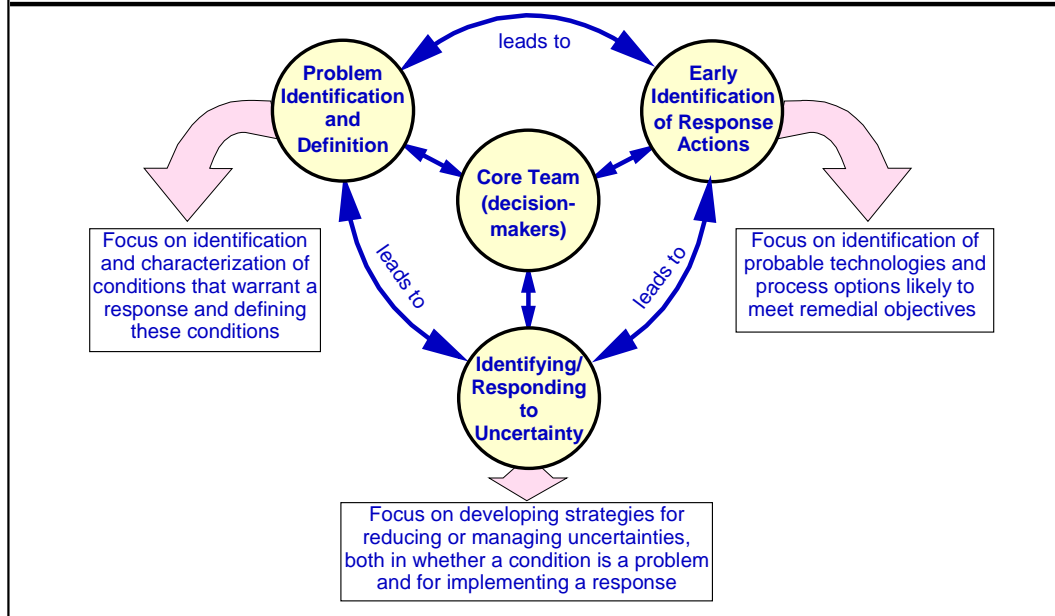
- **Challenges:**
  - Lack of empowerment
  - Budget constraints
  - Fear of sharing (and taking) responsibility
  - Existing relationships
- The best approach to meeting these challenges is to develop a working team, and jointly make decisions

DOE, EPA, and states have undertaken several initiatives to help meet these challenges, including:

- **Interim Final Guidance on Improving Communication to Achieve Collaborative Decision Making at Department of Energy Sites, 1996** - DOE and EPA, with participation by several state regulators, jointly prepared guidance on improving communication to achieve collaborative decision making. This guidance describes a communication framework to improve compliance, accelerate cleanups, and increase program efficiencies

- **Federal Facilities Streamlined Oversight Directive** - EPA has initiated a policy directive to streamline oversight at federal facilities in a systematic, planned manner. EPA plans to publish the final directive in January 1997

## Core team implements the other three principles



As will be highlighted throughout the remaining modules, the focus of the core team changes depending on where you are in the overall project

The level of success in implementing the other three principles effectively is directly related to the effectiveness of the core team